

Top Secret 231

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Wednesday June 2, 1976

CI NIDC 76-129C

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

DIA review(s) completed.

State Dept. review completed

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Wednesday June 2, 1976.

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The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

LEBANON

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Syria's decision to send additional troops into Lebanon underscores Damascus' renewed determination to arrest the deterioration in Lebanese security and to ensure that president-elect Ilyas Sarkis is able to succeed President Franjiyah.

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During the past two days, Syrian forces have moved into northern Lebanon near Qubayyat and Andaqat and into the central part of the country near Zahlah.

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At least one Syrian armored battalion entered northern Lebanon on Monday, and other Syrian units may have been sent into the area or moved up to the border inside Syria. The US defense attache in Damascus saw a battalion-size armored unit from Syria's 3rd Armored Division heading north from the city on Monday. The Defense Intelligence Agency believes that only a company-size Syrian unit entered northern Lebanon on Monday.

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Troops reportedly have spread out along the Beirut-Damascus highway and intend to open the roads in eastern Lebanon, lifting the leftist blockade of the Christian forces in Zahlah.

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It is not yet clear if this force is part of the Syrian armored brigade that has been astride the Syrian-Lebanese border near Al-Masna since mid-April.

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Primary Objective

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[redacted] The Syrians' immediate objective is to relieve those Christian militiamen in the north and east who have been cut off from the main body of Christian forces. [redacted]

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[redacted] The Syrians' primary aim is to build up Syrian regular forces in Lebanon to smooth the transition of power from Franjiyah to Sarkis and to protect Syrian-directed mediation. Damascus almost certainly has concluded that its success in Lebanon hinges on bringing overwhelming military pressure on extremists from both the Christian and Muslim sides and on Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat, who has alternately helped and hindered Syrian policy in Lebanon.

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[redacted] Although the Syrians will want to assess fully the repercussions of their latest move, they are probably prepared to send in additional troops if necessary.

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Israeli, Other Reaction

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[redacted] The Israeli government continues to maintain its low-key public attitude toward Syrian actions in Lebanon. Israeli defense ministry spokesmen yesterday said that Israel would not intervene in Lebanon as long as Syrian actions did not take the situation beyond the context of a civil war.

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[redacted] Although the statement had a warning tone, it seemed to reflect an Israeli view that Syria's latest move is intended to end the fighting in Lebanon and is not a prelude to massive

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military intervention that could threaten Israel's security. Syria's decision to renew the UN mandate in the Golan Heights last week almost certainly helped allay some of Israel's concern.

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[REDACTED] The entry of additional Syrian troops has predictably elicited sharp reactions from Arafat and Jumblatt. Both have sent messages to Soviet Premier Kosygin--who arrived in Damascus yesterday--reportedly urging the Soviet leader to protest Syrian policy on Lebanon. The timing of Syria's move, however, suggests that Damascus intended to present Kosygin with an accomplished fact.

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[REDACTED] President-elect Sarkis has so far managed to dissociate himself from Syria's latest decision to intervene. He apparently received endorsements of his peace proposal yesterday from several leftist leaders and is still scheduled to meet with Jumblatt sometime this week.

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[REDACTED] Sarkis' efforts could be quickly derailed, however, if Jumblatt decides to press his own campaign against Damascus. The leftist leader has called for a pan-Arab protest strike tomorrow but so far has not issued a call to arms.

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USSR-YUGOSLAVIA

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[] Prospects for a Tito-Brezhnev summit before fall have dimmed, and Belgrade is making it plain that the Soviet demand for conformity in the communist movement is the key impediment to the talks.

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[] Last Friday, Tito's top subordinate in the party told British journalists that as far as he knows, "Brezhnev will not be coming." Another key subordinate commented that Yugoslav relations with the Soviet Union are approaching a "coolness" unprecedented in recent years.

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[] Over the weekend, Tito finally added his personal contribution to Belgrade's three-month-long polemic against the Soviets. He had previously remained aloof, probably in the hope of preserving his friendly personal relationship with the Soviet party chief.

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[] In a speech in Montenegro--where pro-Soviet cominformist subversives were discovered in 1974--Tito reviewed a host of Yugoslav grievances against Moscow without citing the Soviets by name. He revived charges of external support for the cominformists and implicitly complained that the Kremlin's appeal to "proletarian internationalism" is, in part, an effort to undermine Yugoslavia's independence in foreign policy.

25X1 [] Tito hotly defended his regime's revolutionary credentials and denounced recent Soviet books and articles denigrating Belgrade's domestic achievement and its role in nonaligned matters.

25X1 [] Differences with the Soviets over the preparation of a document for the European communist party conference seem to be another central issue for the Yugoslavs. Over the weekend, the Yugoslav press agency scored a recent Soviet book for advancing Moscow's assertions to be the communists' "center for the entire world." Belgrade also announced, in a broadcast to Moscow, the publication of a new book, *Tito's Historical No to Stalinism*. []

THAILAND

25X1 [] Thai Foreign Minister Phichai has announced in a nationwide address that the government decided at a cabinet meeting yesterday not to allow unilateral US operations at the Ramasun intelligence collection facility in northeast Thailand.

25X1 [] The foreign minister said that the government would take steps to have all US personnel stationed at Ramasun, as well as equipment at the site which cannot be operated by the Thai, removed by the July 20 deadline.

25X1 [] Phichai affirmed that Bangkok would continue negotiations to retain other equipment which can be operated by Thai personnel and to obtain additional US military supplies to enhance Thai capabilities. Phichai emphasized that the cabinet decision, based on recommendations of the National Security Council, had been unanimous. []

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IRAN - SAUDI ARABIA

25X1 [] The three-day visit of Saudi King Khalid to Iran last week //left the Shah convinced that Riyadh will never fully cooperate with him in regional approaches to issues such as Persian Gulf security. The Shah, however, informed the US embassy that he is satisfied the Saudis are not deliberately working to undermine Iranian policy.//

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[] The Shah is not ready to abandon his efforts to secure closer cooperation among area governments, but he may decide to concentrate more fully on strengthening bilateral ties and on persuading Gulf rulers to accept the notion that Iran may act alone to police the Gulf.

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[] The threat of unilateral action has been a consistent but subordinate feature of Iran's Gulf policy. In an interview with a Saudi newspaper before Khalid's visit, the Shah cited his preference for cooperation, but bluntly reiterated his determination to make Iran strong enough to "defend the region" alone if necessary. []

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[] The Shah followed his usual practice of greeting visiting Gulf rulers in his military uniform to underscore Iran's intention to rely on its own military strength in the absence of mutual security arrangements.

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[] Other topics reportedly discussed during Khalid's largely ceremonial visit were OPEC pricing and the renewal of requests by the Palestine Liberation Organization to open an office in Tehran. []

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INDIA

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[] National and state leaders of India's Congress Party gave overwhelming approval at a meeting in New Delhi last week-end to Prime Minister Gandhi's emergency rule and to a package of proposed constitutional changes. The endorsement was pro forma, but cleared the way for easy parliamentary approval of the package later this year.

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[] The proposed changes to the constitution represent a major effort to diminish the review-powers of the judiciary. Gandhi wants to eliminate this potential impediment to her programs. Included is a proposal that would prevent the Supreme Court from reviewing constitutional amendments approved by parliament.

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[] This will in effect give Gandhi a free hand to amend the constitution since she has compliant majorities in both houses of parliament and controls most of the state governments. Amendments must be ratified by the two houses of parliament and at least half of the state legislatures.

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[] In a speech at the party conference, Gandhi stressed her commitment to socialism despite the apparent rightist trend in some economic policies during the past year. This probably was meant to reassure the USSR--which Gandhi will visit next week--as was her denial that India would repudiate its old friends as a result of the decision to improve relations with China.

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[] Gandhi referred to the continuing efforts of some opposition parties to unite in a single party, warning that no group would be allowed to stand in the way of the nation's progress. []

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JAPAN-CUBA

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[REDACTED] Japan provided Cuban Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodriguez red carpet treatment during his eight-day visit to Japan but gave little encouragement to his aim of expanding bilateral economic ties. The Japanese were notably unenthusiastic in responding to Rodriguez' pitch for increased sugar purchases and for new credits to finance Cuban imports of Japanese goods.

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[REDACTED] Tokyo has little need for Cuban sugar at this time in view of lagging domestic consumption and assured long-term supply contracts with Australia, Brazil, and several other countries. The Japanese are clearly reluctant to extend substantial new credits because they believe Havana is currently a poor credit risk, although they reportedly agreed to consider specific Cuban proposals later on a case-by-case basis.

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[REDACTED] The reception accorded Rodriguez by Prime Minister Miki, Foreign Minister Miyazawa, and other senior government leaders was intended to assuage both Rodriguez and the Japanese business community. Japanese businessmen had previously lobbied vigorously for positive official responses to Cuban proposals.

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[REDACTED] Over the past few years, the global recession has prompted a number of Japanese business leaders to press for an expansion of Japan's trading relations with Eastern Europe and Cuba.

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[] Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of some businessmen and Japan's position as Cuba's second largest trading partner, Tokyo's currently pessimistic view of the Cuban economy and its sensitivity about Cuban foreign policy make very unlikely any positive Japanese response to future Cuban initiatives. []

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